



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/743,125	12/22/2003	Peter M. Bonutti	2500DV2CN2DV3CN6	7494

7590 05/05/2006

Kimberly V. Perry, Esq.
U.S. Surgical
A Division of Tyco Healthcare Group, LP
150 Glover Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06856

EXAMINER

KASZTEJNA, MATTHEW JOHN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3739

DATE MAILED: 05/05/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/743,125

Applicant(s)

BONUTTI, PETER M.

Examiner

Matthew J. Kasztejna

Art Unit

3739

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 February 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 11-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 11-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 December 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>2/3/06</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Notice of Amendment

In response to the amendment filed on February 3, 2006, canceled claims 1-10 and new claims 11-19 are acknowledged. All previous rejections are *withdrawn* based upon the cancellation of all previously pending claims. The previous indication of allowable subject material is *withdrawn*. The following new grounds of rejection are set forth:

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 11-19 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 11 of copending Application No. 10/729,634. Although the conflicting claims are not identical,

Art Unit: 3739

they are not patentably distinct from each other because claim 11 of the instant application is broader than claims 1 and 9 of copending Application No. 10/729,634. Claims 1 and 11 of copending application No. 10/729,634 recite a retractor comprised of a shaft, inflatable bladder disposed at an end of the shaft where the bladder has an inflatable shape selected from the group consisting of circular, oval, eccentric, oblong, conical, wedge-shaped, V-shaped and multiple lobes, along with other features. Claim 11 of the instant application recites a retractor comprised of a shaft and an inflatable bladder that is eccentric or eccentrically mounted on the shaft. Furthermore, claims 13-17 and 19 of the instant invention are identical to claims 4-8 and 15 of copending Application No. 10/729,634, respectively.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 11-19 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 7 of copending Application No. 10/743,192. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claim 11 of the instant application is broader than claims 1 and 7 of copending Application No. 10/743,192. The combination of claims 1 and 7 disclose a similar retractor of the instant invention differing only in the shape of the inflatable bladder. Furthermore, claims 13-17 and 19 of the instant invention are identical to claims 2-6 and 9 of copending Application No. 10/743,192, respectively.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claims 11-19 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 15-21 of copending Application No. 10/729,768 (Note: Claims 15-21 refer to the most recent claim amendment on file in Application No. 10/729,768 - filed July 1, 2005). Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claim 11 of the instant application is broader than claim 1 and 21 of copending Application No. 10/729,768. Claim 1 of copending Application No. 10/729,768 recites an apparatus comprised of a shaft and an inflatable bladder wherein the inflatable bladder has a shape selected from the group consisting of: eccentric, conical and wedge-shaped, along with other features. Claims 13-17 are identical to claims 16-20 of copending Application No. 10/729,768, respectively.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 11-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Solano et al.

In regards to claims 11-15, Solano et al., in figure 5c, disclose shaft 22 and inflatable bladder 16 which expands eccentrically when inflated when inflated. The Solano et al. device is a retractor since it moves tissue. Alternatively, it would have been obvious that the Solano et al. device is a retractor since moves tissue. As to claims 16 and 17, shaft 22 is rigid in portion 38 and flexible in portion 36. Solano et al. fail to disclose a cannula. However, it is old and well known in this art to use a cannula when inserting a catheter in the body in order to obtain the advantage of smoothly and accurately facilitating its insertion. It would have been obvious to use a cannula with the Solano et al. catheter so that it too would have this advantage. In regards to claims 18-19, two bladders 16 can be seen in Figure 5 and it is also well known in the art to separately control inflatable bladders.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-10 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew J. Kasztejna whose telephone number is (571) 272-6086. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 8:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Linda C.M. Dvorak can be reached on (571) 272-4764. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3739

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MJK



4/19/06



LINDA C. M. DVORAK
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
GROUP 3700